

# INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS

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### COLORED BANDS ON YOUNG GULLS HELP SCIENTISTS

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Nearly 8,000 young herring gulls are about to begin their wanderings wearing brightly colored celluloid bands on their legs, says the U. S. Biological Survey. For the second consecutive year, fledgling gulls at nine key stations along the Atlantic coast from southern New England to the Gulf of St. Lawrence, have been given colored bands through a cooperative banding project sponsored by the Biological Survey, the Linnaean Society of New York, and the Northeastern Bird-banding Association.

Together with the regulation Government aluminum band, red, yellow, blue, green, black, and white bands were arranged, this year, in different combinations to indicate the place of the birds' origin. Fishermen, Coast Guard men, scientists, ferry boat captains, and bird students may all cooperate in this venture by reporting any birds so marked, and they will be told the age of the birds and where they were banded.

Through this project, begun last year when 6,000 gulls were marked with color combinations in the same area, the Survey hopes to gather valuable data, hitherto unknown, as to the winter distribution of the herring gull, its plumage changes, exact breeding age, and return to natal area in the breeding season. The feasibility of the undertaking was demonstrated in the New York City region alone where 180 sight recoveries of gulls banded with color combinations in Canada and New England were recorded during the past year.

It was formerly necessary, according to the Survey, to await the death of the bird that had been marked with the less conspicuous aluminum band, in order to obtain pertinent data on the birds' habits. The colored band is visible at a distance of 50 yards, and 'sight recoveries,' particularly at places of gull concentration, can easily be made.

Persons observing gulls with colored bands are asked to note the colors and exact arrangement of the bands on the legs, and send their reports to the Bureau of Biological Survey, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., or the Gull Survey, American Museum of Natural History, New York, N.Y. Gulls banded this year will be in the dusky brown first-year plumage, while those marked last year will have the lighter and grayer second-year plumage, which shows more or less white on wings and tail.

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